

SELECTIONS.

From the Nantucket Islander.

At a public meeting of the colored inhabitants of Nantucket, held in the Zion's Church, February 23d, 1842, the following resolution was offered by the Rev. Wm. Serrington, and after some remarks from Wm. Berry, Wm. Harris and others, was adopted:

Resolved, That whereas the law of this Commonwealth, in reference to the privilege of education in our town schools, makes no distinction in relation to the complexion or symmetry of its inhabitants, it is therefore the judgment of the oppressed portion of the citizens of Nantucket, that it is their right, and they ought to claim, and do desire to enjoy among other rights, the right of having their youth educated in the same schools which are common to the more favored members of this community.

The following resolution was offered by Wm. W. Morris:

Resolved, That the course of those gentlemen who advocated and sustained by their votes a method of procedure which would enable our children to receive equal advantages with all the children of this Commonwealth, is duly appreciated by us, and entitles them to our confidence, approbation and esteem.

This resolution was advocated by Wm. R. Robinson, C. D. Brown and others, and was unanimously adopted.

It was voted that a committee of three be appointed to have the proceedings of this meeting, with an address to the citizens of Nantucket, published in the Nantucket Inquirer and the Islander, of this place.

ADDRESS

To the School Committee, and other inhabitants of the town of Nantucket.

Having availed ourselves of the opportunity of witnessing your proceedings at the Town Hall, a short time ago, we were forcibly struck by the matter which was then the subject of your deliberations, and on which you were called to act. It will not be necessary for us to say anything in relation to the power of the School Committee, nor of the duty which necessarily devolves upon them, by virtue of their being a School Committee—the agents of the whole community—to attend to the department of what is called 'Common School Education,' and to see that the law in reference to their charge is carried out. Nor does the resolution, together with its amendment, appear to us to be of vital importance either way, if we understand the arguments that were advanced by some of the gentlemen then present; and our reasons are these,

1st. The citizens of the town then assembled were not a legislature.

2d. We did not assemble to offer a resolution to abolish a proscriptive or unfair law which forbids the extension of a common school privilege to all classes of the community; but, if we were assembled for anything, at the moment of our action upon the amendment of that resolution, it was to have been this, whether it be best to observe the laws which are in themselves impartial and just, which extend like privileges to all classes of the Commonwealth! In bringing the subject of our claim before our fellow citizens, we wish by no means, to convey the idea that they have inflicted a recent wrong upon us, as an oppressed portion of the citizens of this town, and a wound of some years standing, the sentiment of which, if it be chafed, is apt to become keen. We look upon ourselves, and we feel as an INJURED PORTION of this community, and injured indeed in such a way that no member of this Commonwealth can possibly be benefited by it. It may now be asked, In what respect are you injured? How can it be shown that you are not impartially dealt with? Wherein have your rights been violated? To these inquiries, we answer briefly;

This Commonwealth is, or may be considered, as a large Society, having an instrument called a Constitution. This instrument is intended to express the object of the association, and defines the obligations under which its members have come in respect to each other. It expresses the manner in which that object is to be accomplished; that is, it declares what the individual promises to do for the society, and what the society promises to do for the individual, and the object for which the association is formed. We have also a code of laws, which are supposed to be agreeable with the spirit of the Constitution in general. Having made the above remarks, we now take for granted that the Constitution and laws of this Commonwealth make no distinction among its citizens on account of complexion or symmetry. If this be acknowledged, then we infer that the Constitution and law of this State recognize the equality of its citizens in respect to rights. Again, whatever system may be formed or arrangements made for the benefit of the members of this Commonwealth, let it be the common school system, or any other system by which its inhabitants may be benefited or improved, the inference is, that all are to enjoy the advantages to be derived from them on equal terms, in the same manner, and in the same amount. This inference, we presume our citizens will acknowledge to be reasonable and just, unless any one will attempt to show that God created man with as great a variety of rights as there are distinctions of color and form; and that society has a right to proportion the privileges of its members upon such considerations. This assumption is so big with absurdity, that it needs no argument to make it inconsistent.

The last desperate attempt in the House not only to abridge but utterly to annihilate the freedom of speech and of the press, and of the right of petition by the people of the free States, is that monstrous conspiracy, the extent of which has been partially detected and exposed in the course of my recent trial upon charges of high treason, subversion of perjury, and other enormous crimes—FOR PRESENTING A PETITION.

In that emergency, formidable only by the combination of conflicting masses of power against me as the representative of the first principles of freedom in the House, your generous sympathy, and that of the citizens of Rochester, in whose name you have addressed me, was a cheering consolation even before the hour of my deliverance. It cheers me still amid the persecution, hitherto baffled, but not yet extinguished; and will remain as an inheritance to my children, and an unfailing augury of the final triumph of the cause in which I suffer, should it require, in the progress of the conflict, the sacrifice even of my life.

Receive, again, for yourselves, and your constituents, the thanks of your friend and fellow-citizen,

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

From the Portsmouth Journal.

Decision of the U. S. Supreme Court, respecting FUGITIVE SLAVES.

This decision is one of the most important ever made by that court or any other;—as it involves, not merely the right of a few slaves or free people of color, but of all the States,—and involves them in such a way as can hardly fail to make but one party of this question in all the States of the North and West.

It is not easy to predict its remote and ultimate consequences; but some of its present and immediate effects are sufficiently obvious. Among them are the following:

It will open anew, a discussion of the principles and practice of slavery. This discussion will be carried on in Congress, by the press, and in various other ways; and from the nature of the case, it must be more thorough than any thing we have had yet, in this line.

Petitions for an alteration of the Constitution will pour into Congress from all quarters, under circumstances in which they must be received and will be heard. Pennsylvania, New-York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Maine and Vermont have laws and citizens of their own at stake in this matter; and all the other free States, New-Hampshire not excepted, will make common cause with them. The signers of those petitions will not be merely a few fanatics, but will include the enlightened of all classes and all parties—who cannot fail to see, that, by this decision, the Constitution is actually made to do what Mr. Hudson in his Tariff speech said some politicians wished it to do, namely, 'to protect slavery and nothing else.'

If this decision bore as hard on the South as it does on the North, we should hear at once the threats of nullification, secession and disunion. But with the North it is different. There is a peaceful remedy!

The Constitution provides for its own amendment, and it must be amended in this particular.

The regular mode of doing this is through Congress, which can be addressed by petitions and memorials to that purpose; and as before suggested, they will pour in like a cloud.

To show the operation of this decision, we will allude to some well known facts, and suppose the result of a case, in which the citizens of New-Hampshire would feel some interest.

Two female slaves, young women, made their escape from one of the first families in Virginia, (say Gen. Washington's many years ago, and came to this State. They secreted themselves in a neighbor-

boring town: one of them was betrayed by some informer, and carried back to her servitude, but the other eluded all search, and was never reclaimed, who knew her, and almost venerated by many for her master's sake. This slave had a daughter, almost white, who was born in New-Hampshire, and never suspected she was a slave at all, and could not be so considered by our laws, which acknowledge no such relation as master and slave. But, by this decision, any recreant heir at law of Gen. Washington might come into this State, and claiming this woman, whom he never saw before, as his property, could carry her off without judge or jury. He could take her children, too, if she had any, even though they might be much whiter than himself—and if her husband, a free man, dared to resist, and the claimant in defending his property from their own husband and father should happen to kill him, it would not be his master, but *justifiable homicide*. For the decision is, that every slave owner may take his human property wherever he can find it, and though the law of New-Hampshire will condemn him as a master-slave, and a murderer,—the Supreme Court of the United States, on a writ in error, will pronounce our laws unconstitutional, and let the decision of the citizens of Nantucket.

WILLIAM SERRINGTON,
WILLIAM MORRIS,
WILLIAM HARRIS,
Committee for Publication.

Letter from John Quincy Adams.

Thomas Kempton, Walter S. Griffis, John Hawks, E. Pomeroy, and P. G. Buchan, Esqrs., Officers of a meeting of citizens of the city of Rochester, in the State of New-York, held on the 8th of Feb. 1842.

WASHINGTON, 16th Feb., 1842.

FELLOW-CITIZENS: I have received with deep and grateful sensibility your letter of the 9th inst., together with a copy of three resolutions adopted on the preceding evening at a meeting of the citizens of the city of Rochester.

The Constitution of the United States expressly provides that Congress shall make *no law abridging the freedom of speech, of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances*.

It must be perfectly obvious to every one that the interdict upon Congress to *abridge* the freedom of speech and of the press, and the right of petition, applies, if possible with double force to each separate branch of the legislative power; and that neither the Senate nor the House of Representatives of the United States can refuse or evade the *reception of petitions, without abridging the freedom of speech, of the press, and the right of petition*; for the freedom of the press and the right of petition themselves are but modifications of the freedom of speech.

The Constitution has prescribed no limitation or restriction upon the right of the people to petition, with regard to the subject prayed for. The legislative power can prescribe no such limitation or restriction without *abridging* the right.

Every refusal of the right of petition, or amendment, appears to us to be of vital importance either way, if we understand the arguments that were advanced by some of the gentlemen then present; and our reasons are these,

1st. The citizens of the town then assembled were not a legislature.

2d. We did not assemble to offer a resolution to abolish a proscriptive or unfair law which forbids the extension of a common school privilege to all classes of the community; but, if we were assembled for anything, at the moment of our action upon the amendment of that resolution, it was to have been this, whether it be best to observe the laws which are in themselves impartial and just, which extend like privileges to all classes of the Commonwealth!

In bringing the subject of our claim before our fellow citizens, we wish by no means, to convey the idea that they have inflicted a recent wrong upon us, as an oppressed portion of the citizens of this town, and a wound of some years standing, the sentiment of which, if it be chafed, is apt to become keen. We look upon ourselves, and we feel as an INJURED PORTION of this community, and injured indeed in such a way that no member of this Commonwealth can possibly be benefited by it. It may now be asked, In what respect are you injured? How can it be shown that you are not impartially dealt with? Wherein have your rights been violated? To these inquiries, we answer briefly;

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POETRY.

From the North American.
A PRAYER.
(1. Corinthians, xiii.)

Father, on my bended knee,
Hear me ask a boon from thee:
Give me, if thou wilt, the charm
Of eloquence, thy truth to arm,
That the sinful soul may tremble,
And the vile no more dissemble;
Touch my lips with sacred fire,
Such a kindles Heaven's choir
When cherubim and seraphim
Swell with sainth' immortal hymn;
Give me strong prophetic sight,
To read thy mystic arieth;
Faith to make the mountain yield
Easy path as meadow-field—
Grant me, if thou wilt, all these;
Yet not all my heart can ease,
If thou dost not grant to me,
Gentle, lowly Charity.
Without this, they all shall tell
Like tinkling cymbal, empty bell.

Had I riches, and a heart
All in mercy to impart;
Faith to yield my willing breath
In a martyr's fiery death;
Little would they profit me
Without gentle Charity.
Charity that breathes long,
Though I suffer cruel wrong;
To the erring always kind,
To my own worth always blind;
Glad of others' happy lot,
In his profit mine forgot;
Vaunting not superior good,
Never proud, or harsh, or rude;
May I rather fear than fight,
Yield my due with meek delight;
Slowly stirred to words of blame,
Slowly seeing others' shame;
'Neath my trials never grieving,
All a brother's praise believing;
Ever hoping for the best;
And enduring all the rest;

This is what I ask from Thee,
Gentle, lowly Charity.

Little now at best we know,
Though with prophet's fire we glow;
But when Thou shalt radiant come,
And reveal the mighty sum,
Then shall we in glory see
Only gentle Charity.
When I was a little child,
Foolish were my words, and wild;
Feebly learned what I was taught,
Feebly then of wisdom thought—
Now, Lord, let my manhood be
Strong in gentle Charity.

THE PILOT.

BY ALEXANDER COCHRAN.

The waves are high, the night is dark,
Wild roar the foaming tides,
Dashing around the straining bark,
As gallantly she rides!
Pilot! take heed what course you steer;
Our bark is tempest-driven!
Stranger, be calm, there is no fear
For him who trusts in Heaven!
On, pilot! mark you thunder cloud—
The lightning's lurid rivers;
Hark to the wind, 'tis piping loud—
The mainmast bends and quivers!
Stay, pilot, stay, and shorten sail;
Our stormy try-sail's driven!
Stranger, what matters calm or gale,
To him who trusts in Heaven?
Borne by the winds, the vessel flees
Up to that thundering cloud;
Now tottering low, the spray-winged seas
Conceal the top-most shroud.
Pilot! the waves break o'er us fast,
Vainly our bark has striven!
Stranger, the Lord can rule the blast,
Go, put thy trust in Heaven!
Good hope! good hope! one little star
Gleams o'er the waste of waters;
'Tis like the light reflected far,
Of Beauty's loveliest daughters!
Stranger, good hope He giveth thee,
He has often given;
Then learn this truth,—wher'er may be,
To put thy trust in Heaven!

THE ENGLISH WORKMAN'S HYMN.

Lord, thou the toiling earth hast made,
By thy great power,
And gave to man the sois, and said,
'Thy bread be sure.'

But grasping hands have cursed the plan
Which thou called good;
And, trampling on their fellow-man,
Have stole his food.

How long shall we and want oppress
The sons of toil;
And blanch the cheek with dire distress,
Which ought to smile?

Shall weeping wives and children cry
In vain for bread;

And sires and sons stand tamely by,
In slavish dread?

Shall iron-hearted tyrants freeze,
By dark control,
Man's high and noble sympathies,
Within the soul?

No! righteous Heaven, our prayer
We breathe to thee;

And by our plundered homes we swear
We shall be free!

Up! in the majesty and might
Of conscious worth;

Rise! toil-worn men, and for thy right
Stand boldly forth.

Forward! in moving millions on!
Like ocean's tide;

And may the God of truth and freedom
Be your guide.

—

TRUTH.

Truth will prevail, though men abhor
The glory of its light,
And wage exterminating war,
And put all foes to flight.

Though trodden under foot of men,
Truth from the dust will spring,
And from the press—the lip—the pen—in tones of thundering ring.

Beware—beware, ye who resist
The light that beams around,
Lest, are you look through error's mist,
Truth strike you to the ground.

NON-RESISTANCE.

We commend the following essay to the careful perusal of our numerous readers.—Ed.

For the Liberator.

Ballot-Box and Battle-Field.

TO VOTERS IN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

The object of this essay is to establish the following position: EACH VOTER IN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT VOTES FOR THE WAR-MAKING POWER, ACTS AS PRINCIPAL IN SHEDDING WAT-TEETH BLOOD IS SHED BY IT. Each voter is virtually the jailor and hangman—the war-maker and commander-in-chief—and whatever robbery and murder are committed by Congress and the President—by the army and navy—are done by him, and he, individually, must render an account thereof to the final Judge.

If the position be true, it is no slight matter to assume the office of VOTER in this government. This would make it paramount in dignity and importance to all its other offices. When men vote, they are not aware that every ballot is gory and dripping with the heart's blood of thousands—shed by him who casts it into the box. Is it so? Let us see.

THE WAR-MAKING POWER.

What is it? Power over human life to destroy it for the benefit of the destroyers. We never kill our enemies for their good. To suppose it possible is an outrage on common sense. We cannot associate a kind and loving regard for their welfare with killing them.

Neither can we kill our enemies to please God. To suppose that our common Father can be pleased to see His children killing each other, is to attribute to Him that of which, if any human parent were guilty, we should count him a monster of wickedness.

Should a father teach his children to kill each other, in their view, the necessity of the case demanded; and then should countenance and urge on the brotherly fight and slaughter in his presence and approving smile; what would be said of him? Humanity would cry out against him as an unnatural father. Every human being can look to the same God and say—MY FATHER. Should this Heavenly Father say to his children—My children, LOVE ONE ANOTHER; but there will be occasions when it will be necessary for you to fight and kill each other; of these necessary occasions you must be judges. I would have you, therefore, arm yourselves, cherish and strengthen the war-spirit within you, study the art of killing each other; and then, when you shall think necessity demands, in a kind and brotherly way fall upon and kill each other; and I, your common Father, will be present to aid and encourage the fraternal slaughter by my parental smile? Who could wish to be called the child of such a Father? The Father of mercies pleased to see his children fighting and killing each other! Children—brothers and sisters in a tender, affectionate way, fighting, dashes out each other's brains, and tearing out each other's hearts, to please and honor their common Father!

Now, men kill their enemies solely to benefit themselves. The war-making power assumes that this is right.

This power inculcates, also, the right to inflict any injury short of death. If, to carry on human government, we must dispose of life as we see fit, and for our own sake, in the same way, and for the same end we may dispose of all that belongs to life. He that has forfeited life, has forfeited all that belongs to it.

Property and liberty are nothing without life; and no government based on the right to destroy the latter, can ever inspire respect for the former. Can those who kill men for their own interests, persuade others not to enduse them for the same end? Can men killers abolish man-stealing?

What moral influence can he who wields the lash? Property and liberty can never be regarded as sacred under a government that assumes power over life.

A war-making government can afford no protection to human rights; because, in assaulting life, the right on which all human rights depend, it teaches its subjects and all others, that man may be plundered of every right, and that for the interests of the plunderers.

This power takes no account of the guilt or innocence of its victims. It kills those whom it acknowledges to be guilty of no crime; and often for doing what it admits is their right and duty to do.

It sometimes enters into a compact to kill men for what, by its own decisions, is "obedience to God."

It kills men for doing what the killers themselves would do in like circumstances.

It says to the enemy, we will send a spy into your camp, and if you catch and hang him, you are murderers; but if you send one into ours, and we can catch him, it would be our duty to hang him, and thus retaliate. It says to the Indians, We will enter your country, seize your crops, cattle, houses, and lands, and appropriate them to our own use; and this is right—but if you attempt to do so to us, it is our right and duty to destroy you. It says to the Africans, We will steal and enslave you—but if you attempt to steal and enslave us, we will kill you. It says to the slaves, If we were in your circumstances, we would regain liberty by blood—but if you attempt to do so to us, we will shoot you down.

Thus the war-making power sets at naught every principle of justice and humanity. At pleasure, and for no violation of moral principle, it breaks human necks, chops off human heads, tears out human hearts, and blows to atoms human bodies. This is self-evident—for we are there no slaveholders.

Suppose I am a planter, and want a hundred slaves, and send men to Africa to steal them and bring them to me. I meanwhile, sit on my plantation, and move not a hand or foot in the matter.

The piracy is done by my agents. But who acted as principal? Whatever guilt may attach to my agents; the guilt of the whole is really belongs to me as if it had been done by my own hands. I am the chief pirate, and all human tribunals would try me as principal; my agents, as accessories.

This is self-evident—for were there no slaveholders, there would be no men-stealers.

Slaveholders wish to drive the Seminole Indians from Florida, that their fugitive slaves may no longer find refuge among them. They harass them, destroy their crops and stock, on purpose to provoke them to retaliate. The Indians retaliate. Slaveholders raise the cry of Indian massacre, and apply to Congress and the President for protection. The officers being employed by the electors for this very purpose, butcher men, women and children till they are exterminated. Who is responsible? Not the officers and soldiers, Congress and the President, but primarily and above all, the electors. They created and sustain these war-making offices, and the robbery and murder committed by the hundreds of thousands are their own work.

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This power inculcates, also, the right to inflict any injury short of death. If, to carry on human government, we must dispose of life as we see fit, and for our own sake, in the same way, and for the same end we may dispose of all that belongs to life. He that has forfeited life, has forfeited all that belongs to it.

Property and liberty are nothing without life; and no government based on the right to destroy the latter, can ever inspire respect for the former.

Can those who steal men, dissuade others from stealing cattle? Can those who kill men for their own interests, persuade others not to enduse them for the same end? Can men killers abolish man-stealing?

What moral influence can he who wields the lash?

Property and liberty can never be regarded as sacred under a government that assumes power over life.

A war-making government can afford no protection to human rights; because, in assaulting life, the right on which all human rights depend, it teaches its subjects and all others, that man may be plundered of every right, and that for the interests of the plunderers.

This power takes no account of the guilt or innocence of its victims. It kills those whom it acknowledges to be guilty of no crime; and often for doing what it admits is their right and duty to do.

It sometimes enters into a compact to kill men for what, by its own decisions, is "obedience to God."

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